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MARR, PREL, PINR, AMGT, EAID, AQ, LA, RP, TN, VM, WS

SUBJECT: INDONESIA EARTHQUAKE HUMANITARIAN UPDATE #8

Summary

¶1. The Government of Indonesia (GoI) has reported that the official death toll from the September 30 is 1,115 people. During the October 13 to 15 visit of the U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) raised the issue of coordination with the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The USAID/DART continues assessing affected areas, including through a recent assessment of Pariaman District which indicated significant albeit localized shelter damage. The USAID/DART is also monitoring safety and security reports of incidents in affected areas. End summary.

Earthquake Death Toll

¶12. The reported number of people killed by the earthquake has increased as rescue and body recovery efforts continued. Body recovery efforts have now ceased. On October 15, a representative of the GoI National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) informed the USAID/DART that the final death toll from the September 30 earthquake is 1,115 people.

Visit of U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator

-- USAID/DART Raises Humanitarian Coordination Issues --

¶13. From October 13 through 15, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes visited earthquake-affected areas of West Sumatra Province, where he spoke with affected villagers and met with non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives and cluster leads. Holmes also held meetings with the international community, donors, and GoI officials in Padang and Jakarta.

¶14. The USAID/DART has observed strong coordination within the clusters and solid coordination among GoI officials but has not been

aware of significant coordination between clusters and GoI officials. Of particular importance is the engagement of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) with the GoI BNPB to connect the GoI with members of the international humanitarian community. At an October 15 meeting with donors, a USAID/DART representative requested that OCHA share its perspective on coordination between the humanitarian community and the GoI. Both Holmes and the Indonesian U.N. Resident Coordinator (RC) noted having observed good coordination between the GoI and the international humanitarian community, with GoI representation at most clusters. The RC stated that local government engagement has been slow but that local government officials will likely be more proactive.

¶15. (Comment: Despite the U.N.'s assurances, the USAID/DART remains concerned about the level of coordination between the humanitarian community and the GoI. Following the meeting with Holmes, a representative of AusAID commented to the USAID/DART that AusAID had likewise observed a lack of strong coordination between the humanitarian community and GoI counterparts. End comment.)

-- OCHA Funding for Earthquake Response --

¶16. In the October 15 meeting, Holmes stated that OCHA will contribute between \$6 million and \$7 million to the disaster response, through the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). CERF funding will help meet immediate humanitarian needs.

GoI "Emergency Phase"

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¶17. Within the humanitarian community, the GoI's description of the "emergency phase" of the humanitarian response to the earthquake has generated some confusion. On October 15, the USAID/DART met with the BNPB Deputy II for Emergency Management. The BNPB official clarified that the GoI emergency phase is the time during which the following events occur: 1) first responders evacuate casualties, 2) organizations meet basic needs for disaster victims and displaced persons, and 3) organizations conduct immediate, temporary repair of vital infrastructure. When the GoI declares the emergency phase over, all GoI personnel mobilized to respond to the disaster -- including police, members of the military, first responders, and others temporarily working in West Sumatra Province -- leave the disaster-affected areas, and the provincial government begins to manage the emergency response without additional GoI assistance.

¶18. After meeting with the BNPB deputy, the USAID/DART met with the recently-arrived OCHA coordinator in Padang. The USAID/DART requested that this official clarify meaning and implications of the emergency phase to members of the humanitarian community in order to allay confusion and assure donors that international assistance continues to be necessary to augment the GoI's response to the earthquake.

Assessment of Pariaman District

¶19. On October 13, the USAID/DART assessed conditions in Sungai Geringging and Sugai Limau sub-districts of Pariaman District. Roads were passable, although some roads had major cracks that penetrated through the sub-grade. The USAID/DART observed vehicles belonging to international NGOs, as well as GoI response personnel in affected areas.

-- Shelter --

¶10. The USAID/DART observed significant albeit localized damage to houses; some villages sustained significant damage, while houses in other villages remained relatively untouched, with no apparent reason for such differences. The walls of most houses that were damaged had been constructed with river stones or bricks, without reinforcing elements and with thin load-bearing walls. Affected

populations were in the act Q6kQQ0=QQ&g materials -- especially wooden timbers and metal sheet roofing -- to the extent possible.

-- Food Security --

¶11. Villagers who spoke with the USAID/DART reported that few crops were lost but noted problems being able to harvest. (Comment: The USAID/DART tentatively attributes these problems to populations' current focus on securing emergency shelter and rebuilding permanent shelter. End comment.) The USAID/DART observed numerous staple foods and cash crops, including rice, cacao, coconut, and palm kernel, drying along the side of the road. However, the team also recorded a 33 percent increase in the price of rice compared to prices prior to the earthquake in markets in two villages.

-- Health and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene --

¶12. Villagers indicated to the USAID/DART that their health needs were met and that they had not experienced any problems obtaining water.

Safety and Security

¶13. Since arriving in Padang, the USAID/DART has received reports of communities stopping vehicles carrying relief commodities and demanding that drivers give some of the cargo to the community before passing. The villagers' motivations for making these demands

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are unknown. The USAID/DART safety and security officer received such reports during the week of October 4 to 11 but has not received similar reports in recent days. The Indonesian national police were notified of these incidents. The USAID/DART advised an affected NGO to develop stronger ties with the Padang police humanitarian liaisons. The USAID/DART safety and security officer will continue to monitor developments.

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